TL 156-15

RIGHT OF REPLY

BY THE

INDONESIAN DELEGATION

UNDER ITEM 12

Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation is exercising its right of reply in response to a number of speakers who have made references to Indonesia in their statements under item 12.

Firstly, with regard to references made about the Province of Aceh, as we stated in our right of reply under item 10, the occurences in Aceh were instigated by bands of armed criminals. These actions can be seen as a consequence of a certain social and economic disatisfaction which is still apparent, despite the substantial efforts at development made by the Indonesian Government, and despite the positive advances made through these efforts. These bands were engaged in acts of terror and intimidation, which were confined to only three sub-districts in the whole province. Unfortunately, however, they gave the impression that there was widespread social unrest. Some NGOs have tried to exploit these disturbances by attempting to portray

them as having political overtones and thus have blown the situation out of all proportion.

Faced with this situation, it was only natural that the Government of Indonesia should take measures to restore peace and public order. In the process some people were temporarily detained. In this respect, I would like to inform the Commission that as a result of a thorough Police investigation, 24 who were directly involved in the disturbances, in violation of the relevant articles of Indonesian Criminal Law, will be brought to trial next month. The trial will be conducted at the respective local courts and, as normal, the trial will be open to the public.

Mr. Chairman,

References are still being made by both government representatives and NGOs to the question of self-determination in East Timor. If this has any relevance, then it should be raised in the forum in which a continuing dialogue between Indonesia and Portugal is taking place, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General, rather than at the Commission on Human Rights. My delegation welcomes the encouragement which Indonesia has received for this dialogue, but since Indonesia is already fully committed to these talks we feel that perhaps the encouragement would be better directed to the other party concerned.

With regard to the repeated, unfounded allegations of violations of human rights, my Delegation feels obliged to respond, lest it be presumed that these allegations are true.

As to the human rights situation in East Timor, my Delegation has repeatedly stated that the promotion of human rights continues to be the main concern of the Government of Indonesia. In this connection demonstrations were not prohibited as long as they did not disturb public order. Unfortunately these demonstrations were reported in a misleading way, creating the impression that they were spreading throughout the territory, while in fact these isolated demonstrations were mainly a reflection of protest against the lack of employment opportunities.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the views expressed by the distinguished representative of Australia on the situation of East Timor, my Delegation has taken note of his understanding of our efforts to improve the human rights conditions in East Timor. Indeed systematic development of the socio-economic structure as well as of administration in general, including the administration of justice in the province, is being rigorously undertaken by the Government of Indonesia. It is to be noted that Australia has been giving valuable assistance for the development of the province. With regard to that which the Australian delegation referred to as the "residual" problem, may I point out that this

is mainly a legacy of colonialism which entirely neglected the improvement of the welfare of the people, kept them in a state of ignorance and illiteracy, and forced them to live under the subsistence level. In addition, my Delegation would like to reiterate that some of the difficulties we face are also created by certain groups of ex-residents of East Timor, who now live in Australia, and who are now completely out of touch with the prevailing situation in the territory they abandoned.

MR Chairman

Some speakers still see fit to make references to allegations of detentions, torture and killings, which are entirely unfounded, as has been repeatedly stated by my delegation on other occasions, including in our reply under item 10. The fact that the Indonesian Government has invited the Special Rapporteur on Torture to visit our country is clear proof that the Indonesian Government has nothing to hide about the situation, which can be examined by any well meaning observer. ~~My Delegation is convinced that~~ The Indonesian Government is willing to seriously consider any requests to visit East Timor by credible human rights organisations if, for their part, they can display by words and deeds that they are truly sincere in their goodwill, and that they will examine objectively the human rights situation of the Indonesian people of East Timor. It is inconcievable that those who have made derogatory statements even before visiting the territory, should expect the Indonesian Government to believe in their impartiality and allow them access.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, My Delegation would again like to state that our main preoccupation remains the promotion of the enjoyment of all aspects of human rights by the whole people of East Timor. Since the integration of East Timor, the overall situation in the province, in terms of human rights and development, has been more and more encouraging. The few incidents that have taken place, therefore, should correctly be seen as the natural consequences of the dynamics of the development process.

Thank you, Sir.